

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) An information exchange method comprising the steps of:
 - obtaining a content of interest rendered by media using first and second terminal devices for information exchange connected to a computer network;
 - displaying ~~an~~ a video image regarding the content on the first and second terminal devices;
 - sending ~~a first~~ an identification information to identify the displayed video image and ~~a second~~ an object information including information relevant to position or time of an object indicated from the displayed video image from the first and second terminal devices to a server device connected to the computer network, respectively, across the computer network; and
 - allowing communication messages between the first terminal and the second terminal based on the received ~~first~~ identification and ~~second~~ object information by the server device.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The information exchange method as recited in claim 1 wherein:
 - ~~said the~~ first terminal device ~~receives or retrieves~~ displays the video image regarding the content of interest rendered by media and sends ~~said first~~ information to the server device, the first information including first identification information to identify the displayed video image on the first terminal device, and a first target area object information to define a part or all of an object ~~selected~~ indicated from the ~~content of said displayed video image on said the first terminal device~~ a said second information to said server device across the computer network;

~~said-the~~ second terminal device ~~receives or retrieves~~ displays the video image regarding the content of interest rendered by media and sends second information to the server device, the second information including second identification information to identify the displayed video image on the second terminal device, and second ~~target-area-object~~ information to define a part or all of an object indicated from the ~~content of said~~ displayed video image on ~~said-the~~ second terminal ~~as said second information to said server device~~ across the computer network;

~~said-the~~ server device makes up a group of ~~said-the~~ first and second terminal devices, according to a grouping ~~method-process~~ using ~~said-the~~ first and second information sent from ~~said-the~~ first and second terminal devices;

~~said-the~~ first terminal device sends a first message to ~~said-the~~ server device across the computer network;

~~said-the~~ server device sends ~~said-the~~ first message ~~that it received~~ to one or more terminal devices ~~for information exchange~~ belonging to ~~said-the~~ group and including ~~said-the~~ second terminal device ~~across the computer network~~; and

~~said-the~~ second terminal device receives and outputs ~~said-the~~ message.

3. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The information exchange method as recited in claim 2 wherein:

~~said-the~~ grouping ~~method-process~~ comprises one of or a combination of a plurality of the following:

grouping terminal devices for information exchange for which matching to a certain extent occurs regarding ~~said-the~~ first and second information received therefrom;

grouping terminal devices for information exchange for which matching to a certain extent occurs regarding ~~said-the~~ first and second identification information and ~~said the first and second target-area-object informations~~ selected as said second information, received therefrom;

grouping terminal devices for information exchange by limiting the number of terminal devices to form a group to a given number;

grouping terminal devices for information exchange for which matching occurs in one of or a plurality of items of information designating appointed identifiers of terminal devices for information exchange, geographical area, interests, content titles, and community, respectively.

4. (Currently Amended) An information exchange method, comprising the steps of:

obtaining a content of interest rendered by media using a first terminal device for information exchange connected to a computer network;

displaying ~~an a~~ video image regarding the content on the first terminal device;

sending a ~~first-identification~~ information to identify the displayed video image on the first terminal device, ~~a second-an object~~ information including information relevant to position or time of an object indicated from the displayed video image on the first terminal device, and a message from the first terminal device to an information exchange server ~~equipment-device~~ across a computer network;

making up a group of two or more terminal devices including at least the first terminal device and a second terminal device by the ~~information-exchange-server equipment-device~~;

sending the ~~first-identification~~ information, the ~~second-object~~ information and the message received by the ~~information-exchange-server equipment-device~~ to the second terminal device belonging to ~~said-the~~ group across the computer network;

receiving the ~~first-and-second-identification and object~~ information and the message from the ~~information-exchange-server equipment-device~~ by the second terminal device; and

displaying the messages ~~and/or image~~ on the second ~~information-terminal~~ device based on the received ~~first-and-second-identification and object~~ information and the messages.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The information exchange method as recited in claim 4 wherein:

said server device makes up a group of terminal devices for information exchange having a group identifier registered beforehand.

6. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The information exchange method as recited in claim 4 wherein:

~~said the~~ server device makes up a group of terminal devices for information exchange in such a way in which:

~~said the~~ server device makes a list of one or more groups that have been made up and related information (~~which will be referred as~~ group information ~~hereinafter~~) and sends the group list to the first terminal device;

the first terminal device receives and outputs the group list, selects the group information for one group from the group list, ~~and then~~ sends the selected group information to the server device across the computer network; and;

~~said the~~ server device sets the first terminal device to join the group appointed by the selected group information.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The information exchange method as recited in claim 6 wherein:

~~said the~~ group information includes ~~said first~~ the identification information and ~~said second~~ the object information.

8. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The information exchange method as recited in claim 4 wherein:

said message comprises one of or a combination of a plurality of the following items: character strings of text and keywords, audio information, video information, advertising information, time information, thumbnail images, and pointer information.

9. (Currently Amended) A terminal device for information exchange comprising
a first input unit;
a display unit which displays ~~an~~ a video image regarding content of interest
rendered by media;
an information acquisition unit which obtains ~~a first identification~~ information
to identify the displayed video image and ~~a second object~~ information including information
relevant to position or time of object indicated from the ~~display~~ displayed video image by
~~said the~~ first input unit;
a second input unit ~~which inputs to~~ input a message; and
a communication unit which transmits ~~said first the identification~~ and ~~second~~
object information and message ~~over across~~ a computer network. .

10. (Currently Amended) ~~A The~~ terminal device for information exchange as
recited in claim 9, further comprising:
~~_____ means for storing said a~~ storing unit which stores the content of interest; and
~~_____ means for generating and displaying a thumbnail generator which generates and~~
displays a thumbnail image from said first the identification information, ~~said second the~~
object information, and ~~said the~~ stored content of interest on the display unit.

11. (Currently Amended) ~~A The~~ terminal device for information exchange as
recited in claim 9, further comprising:
~~_____ a time shifting means for recording and reproducing unit which records and~~
reproduces the ~~said~~ content of interest.

12. (Currently Amended) ~~An The~~ information exchange method according to
claim 1, wherein said the server device allows communication of messages between the first
terminal device and the second terminal device based on consistency between ~~said first the~~
identification and ~~second the object~~ information from ~~said the~~ first terminal device and ~~said~~

~~first the identification and second the object~~ information from ~~said the~~ second terminal device.

13. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The information exchange method according to claim 12, wherein said the communication messages between the first terminal device and the second terminal device includes chat using ~~said the~~ computer network.

14. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The information exchange method according to claim 12, wherein said the displayed video image regarding the content is a ~~video~~ television video image.

15. (Currently Amended) ~~An~~ The information exchange method according to claim 1, wherein said the object information includes area information indicated from the displayed video image by using a pointing device.